Safety hazards in tunnels on Konkan Rail route

2195. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any safety hazards have been identified in the tunnels of the Konkan Rail route in Maharashtra; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and safeguards provided by Konkan Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) Various safety hazards in tunnels are related to ventilation, trank maintenance, boulder fall, darkness, drainage, refuge communication and fire. Indentified tunnels are provided with ballast-less track to take care of track maintenance problems in long tunnels (more than 4 kms.) and selected lengths of the tunnels are provided with concrete lining, shotcreting, rock bolting to support weak areas. All the tunnels are annually inspected and loose scaling is carried out at the required locations. Ventilation has been provided in tunnels longer than 4 kms. to ensure proper quality of air and to exhaust the smoke emitted by the locomotive. It also prevents suffocation if the train stops inside the tunnel. State of art monitoring and control systems are installed. Lighting has been provided in the identified tunnels to assist passengers to evacute if necessary. All trains on Konkan Railways are vestibuled. Side drains have been provided for the passage of the water with cover on the top to act as pathway and refuges have been provided in the tunnels for men and trolley to accomodate themselves when the train is passing. Communication sockets are provided at 400 m in tunnels to ensure communication between the train crew and the control office in case of any emergency. Also, fire extinguisheres are provided inside the long tunnel to put off the fire in case of a mishap.

Rail line between Tumkur and Chitradurga

2196. SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Minister of Railways have received any proposal to lay rail line between Tumkur and Chitradurga in Karnataka State; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) Record of each and every demand is not maintained. No such demands has been received from the Government of Karnataka in the recent past. However, Hon'ble Memebr of Parliament, Shri Shashi Kumar, has requested to consider construction of new rail line from Tumkur to Chittradurg.

Late running and arrival of trains on SCR

2197. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of trains in South Central Railway which run late or arrived late during the last two years; and

(b) the action taken to improve punctuality of passenger services and strengthening monitoring mechanism for ensuring punctuality?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) On South Central Railway, out of 50353 train run during 2001-2002 (April-March), 1506 trains arrived late at destination. Similarly, out of 52248 trains run during 2002-2003 (April-March), 1812 trains arrived late at destination.

(b) The following steps are being taken by Railways to improve the punctuality of passenger trains:

(i) Intensive, round the clock monitoring of train at different levels *i.e.* Divisional and Zonal Head Quarters levels.

(ii) Punctuality drives are conducted from time to time.

(iii) Running of trains at miximum permissible speed subject to observance of safety limits and speed restrictions.

(iv) Improvement in Time tabling to provide a clear path.

(v) Improvement in standard of maintenance to reduce equipment failures.